

EL-13280

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Mayer Brown LLP  
1909 K Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20006-1101

Main Tel (202) 263-3000  
Main Fax (202) 263-3300  
www.mayerbrown.com

**Kathryn Kusske Floyd**  
Direct Tel (202) 263-3223  
Direct Fax (202) 263-5223  
kkusskefloyd@mayerbrown.com

April 10, 2008

VIA HAND DELIVERY

Ms. Victoria Rutson  
Chief, Section of Environmental Analysis  
Surface Transportation Board  
1925 K Street, N.W., Room 504  
Washington, D.C. 20423

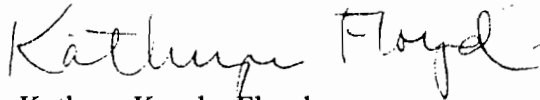
Re: Finance Docket No. 35095, The Alaska Railroad Corp. -- Petition For An  
Exemption From 49 U.S.C. §10901 To Construct and Operate a Rail Line  
Extension to Port MacKenzie, Alaska

Dear Ms. Rutson:

Enclosed for your information please find copies of public comments received between  
January and March 2008 concerning the above-referenced project.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Kathryn Kusske Floyd

cc: David C. Navecky  
Alan Summerville  
Eileen Reilly  
Brad Sworts

Daniel B. Robertson  
11301 Snowline Drive  
Anchorage Ak, 99507

December 26, 2007

Re: Point McKenzie Railroad Extension

I am writing in opposition to the railroad segment denoted as Conn 3 on figures 1 and 2 below.

I am an owner of one the agricultural parcels that will be adversely impacted by this route, specifically the half section of land northwest of the Ayrshire and Farmers road intersection (see figure 2). I was not notified by the Matanuska Susitna Borough or the Alaska Railroad of the planning process or public meetings regarding the rail extension, but eventually found out via word of mouth from other disgruntled landowners in this area.

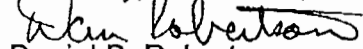
The Carpenter Lake area indicated by the red oval on figure 2 has a number of year round and recreational homes and cabins, small farms, and at least one small business requiring large undeveloped acreage. It is a relatively quiet semi rural area. Carpenter Lake public access provides a nice picnic and fishing area.

A railroad routed through this area is inconsistent with the current area land usage. The noise, emissions, dust, possibly herbicides, etc, associated with a railroad would destroy the aesthetic rural nature of the area. Land values seem likely to decline far below whatever right of way reimbursement might occur. Small businesses in the area would likely be devastated by the Conn 3 route, forcing these people out of business. The maps available via the portmacrail website do not even seem to indicate that there are agricultural parcels impacted by the Conn 3 route.

There seem to be several other viable alternatives. I would strongly prefer that some route other than Conn 3 be selected.

Please forward this letter to the Surface Transportation Board for consideration.

Sincerely,

  
Daniel B. Robertson  
907-346-3714

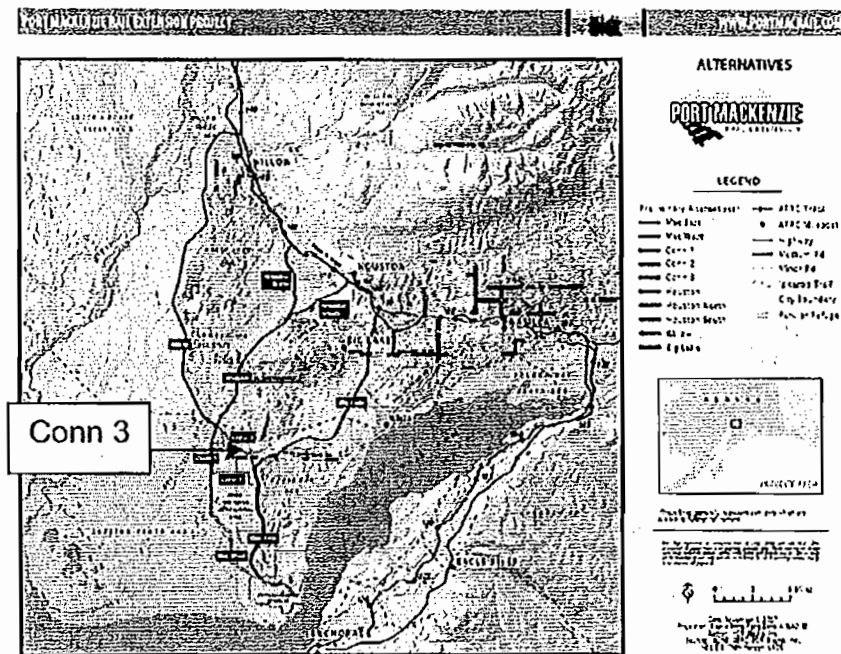


Figure 1. Point McKenzie railroad extension alternatives

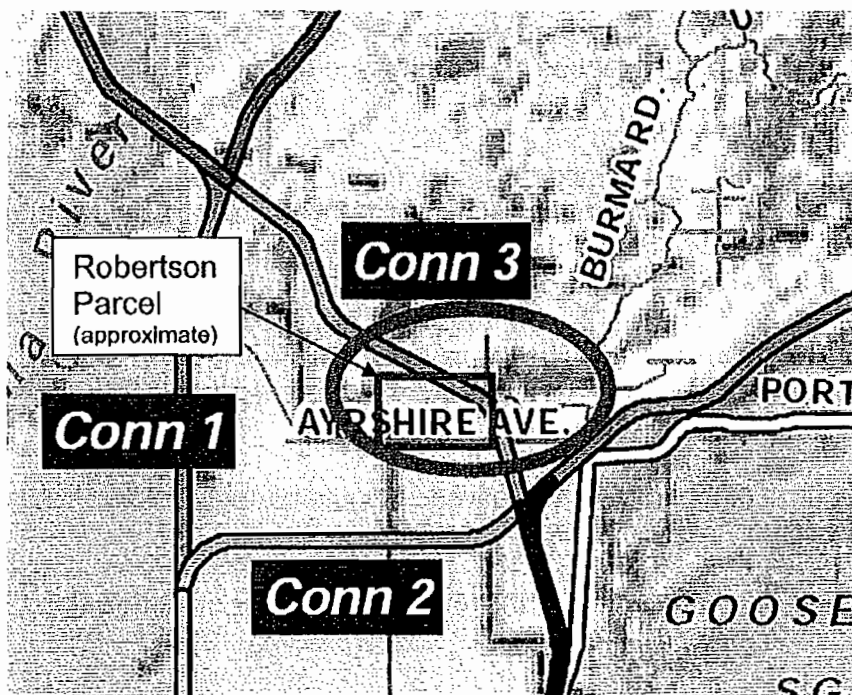


Figure 2. Conn 3 route noise, dust, emissions will adversely impact many private homes, cabins, small farms, businesses in the area indicated by the red oval.



## Port MacKenzie Rail Extension Project

Your input is important to the Matanuska-Susitna Borough and the Alaska Railroad as we pursue the Port MacKenzie Rail Extension project jointly.

Please write legibly (printing is appreciated). Attach additional sheets if necessary.

Name

Shawn Theodore

Phone

982-1692

Address

Mi 13.5 KGBrd

Email

eviltree2000@yahoo

Your Comments:

I think this might be a good idea for job opportunities, also I think transport for goods to Pt Mac is perhaps a good thing.

On the other hand tho... there is the noise factor, but now it's getting so populated out that way I don't think it's really an issue. All the cars driving by, all the trucks... now a train also. I think this is sorta a good idea.

COMMENT FORM

The Mat-Su Borough and Alaska Railroad welcome your input. Please send comments to:



HDR Alaska, Inc.  
Port MacKenzie Rail Extension Comments  
836 S. Colony Way, Suite 2  
Palmer, AK 99645



info@portmacrail.com



Fax (907) 644-2022

**Alcantra, Rosetta M.**

---

**From:** Alcantra, Rosetta M.  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 03, 2008 8:07 AM  
**To:** 'Patty Sullivan'; Alcantra, Rosetta M.  
**Subject:** 010207Ken Farmer Comments

-----Original Message-----

**From:** [mailto:badinc@mtaonline.net]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 02, 2008 7:47 AM  
**To:** Public\_Comment@akrr.com; info@portmacrail.com; Alcantra, Rosetta M.; Longtin, Wendy;  
info@homestead-graphics.com  
**Subject:** Port MacKenzie Comments

Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by  
(badinc@mtaonline.net) on Wednesday, January 2, 2008 at 07:46:45

---

name: Ken Farmer

address: 2826 James T. Circle

city: Wasilla

state: AK

zip: 99654

phone: 373-5325

emailconfirm: badinc@mtaonline.net

emailconfirm2: I oppose the conn 3 route as it goes through the Carpenter Lake Community;  
a quiet Lakeside setting that will be disturbed by a rail line running on its Western edge.  
I plan to retire at my property at the lake, which conn 3 runs directly through my  
property.

button: Submit

---

HTTP\_USER\_AGENT: Mozilla/5.0 (Windows; U; Windows NT 5.1; en-US; rv:1.4) Gecko/20030624  
Netscape/7.1 (ax)

**Alcantra, Rosetta M.**

---

**From:** Patty Sullivan [patty.sullivan@matsugov.us]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 09, 2008 7:03 PM  
**To:** Brian Lindamood; Stephenie Wheeler; Alcantra, Rosetta M.; Longtin, Wendy  
**Cc:** John Duffy; Brad Sworts; Robertson, Donna  
**Subject:** Fwd: Railroad corridor  
**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Red

Patty Sullivan  
Public Affairs Director  
Mat-Su Borough  
[psullivan@matsugov.us](mailto:psullivan@matsugov.us)  
(907)745-9577

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** "Bill O'Hara" <[bohara1944@hotmail.com](mailto:bohara1944@hotmail.com)>  
**Date:** January 9, 2008 3:19:04 PM AKST  
**To:** "Patty Sullivan" <[psullivan@matsugov.us](mailto:psullivan@matsugov.us)>  
**Subject:** Railroad corridor

Today we received the mailout on the Port Mackenzie rail extension. It appears to be the same as the information provided us at the borough assembly workshop on Dec. 11 of 2007.

This information continues to appear to champion the Houston South route ignoring the input of the public and the promised socio-economic studies. To anyone just learning about this project it appears to favor the Houston South route according to the matrix provided.

We are concerned that the borough is misrepresenting the facts here and trying to encourage a route that is clearly not what the public has indicated it wants.

Why the borough continues to ignore the previous study completed in 2003 is a mystery to us.

That study was thorough, included all the missing information, and concluded that the western route to Willow was clearly what the public wanted.

We consider this informational mailout to be purely propaganda.

Sincerely,

Bill O'Hara, President  
Big Lake Community Council

---

Make distant family not so distant with Windows Vista® + Windows Live™. [Start now!](#)

4/5/2008

**Alcantra, Rosetta M.**

**From:** Stephenie Wheeler [wheelers@akrr.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, January 21, 2008 9:41 AM  
**To:** John, Jeanine St.  
**Cc:** Alcantra, Rosetta M.; Lindamood, Brian; Sullivan, Patty  
**Subject:** Re: Port MacKenzie Rail Extension

Jeanine -

Thank you for your emailed comment on the Port MacKenzie Rail Extension. Your comment will become part of our project records/documentation.

The Alaska Railroad has notified the Surface Transportation Board (STB) about the desire to pursue a Port MacKenzie Rail Extension. As the federal authority for approving new rail/rail extensions in the U.S., the STB will be responsible for overseeing the project Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) via a third-party contractor, which was selected earlier this month. While the project sponsor (Mat-Su Borough) and project applicant (Alaska Railroad) will no longer be taking the lead in the project as the STB begins the EIS process, the borough and railroad will continue to forward public comment (such as yours) to the STB, as well as keep folks apprised of project progress through the project web site, [www.portmacrail.com](http://www.portmacrail.com).

Again, we appreciate your interest and input

Sincerely,

Stephenie Wheeler  
Public Involvement Officer  
265-2671

>>> "Jeanine St. John" <JJOHN@llog.lynden.com> 01/18/08 8:42 AM >>>

I support the extension to just north of Willow, AK; however, with all the activity in Willow I believe building a depot in Willow for development of tourism should be a requirement.

Jeanine St. John  
Anchorage & Nancy Lake, AK



# 2008 Alaska Railroad Program of Projects (POP)

Your input is important to the Alaska Railroad as we pursue a program of capital improvements during 2008.  
Please write legibly (printing is appreciated). Attach additional sheets if necessary.

COMMENT FORM

Name

Mary Kusma

Phone

242-6600 242-8001

Address

P.O. Box 22850

Email

mks@sewardalaska.net

Your Comments:

I am in support of the new rail extension.  
This is important improvement for  
Seward and Alaska in general.

Sincerely,

Mary Kusma

The Alaska Railroad welcomes your input. Please send your written comments:



Capital Projects - Public Comment  
Alaska Railroad Corporation  
P.O. Box 107500  
Anchorage, AK 99510-7500



ARRC's TTY/TTD 265-2620  
or voice 265-2494  
Alaska Relay TTY 800-770-8973  
or voice 1-800-770-8255



public\_comment@akrr.com



Fax (907) 265-2365





January 22, 2008

Mary Kulstad  
P.O. Box 2288  
Seward, AK 99664

**EXTERNAL AFFAIRS**

TEL 907.265.2671

FAX 907.265.2365

Dear Ms. Kulstad:

Thank you for attending the Alaska Railroad Project Open House in Seward on January 19, 2008. And thank you for providing written comment regarding the Port MacKenzie Rail Extension project, a joint effort between the Matanuska-Susitna Borough and the Alaska Railroad.

Considering your interest, I wanted to provide an update on where we are at with this project. The project team concluded its fact-gathering stage (May – December 2007) during which pertinent information from the local perspective helped to formulate and refine potential route alternatives for connecting the port to the railroad's mainline. Earlier this month, we compiled a package of information consisting of an initial analysis of route alternatives, along with back-up including input from Alaskan residents and agencies, analysis of data from previous studies, and data from more recent field studies and conceptual planning efforts.

This package of information was forwarded to the Surface Transportation Board (STB) in mid-January. The STB is the federal agency with authority over any new U.S. rail lines (including extensions), and will oversee the environmental impact statement (EIS) that is required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

Also in January, the STB selected a third-party contractor (ICF International) to carry out the EIS. Enclosed is a flow chart of how the project is expected to progress through the NEPA process, with a few known dates indicated as reference points. The in-depth EIS is expected to take 18 months or longer, and will assess community (e.g., transportation, zoning, infrastructure), socio-economic (e.g., recreation, commerce), and environmental (e.g., wildlife, wetlands, waterbodies) impacts and determine mitigating actions.

So, you see, there is still much work to be done on the Port MacKenzie Rail Extension project. Involvement from interested citizens, such as you, is important at every step – from our alternative analysis in 2007, through the STB-led environmental phase to come.

Now that the STB is spearheading the EIS, actions of the Mat-Su Borough and Alaska Railroad are limited to providing information as requested by the STB and ICF in support of the EIS. We will also forward any additional public correspondence to the STB. While no longer in lead roles, the Borough and Railroad will continue to keep the public apprised of project developments and public involvement opportunities through the project web site – [www.portmacrail.com](http://www.portmacrail.com). We encourage you to check the site often for project updates.

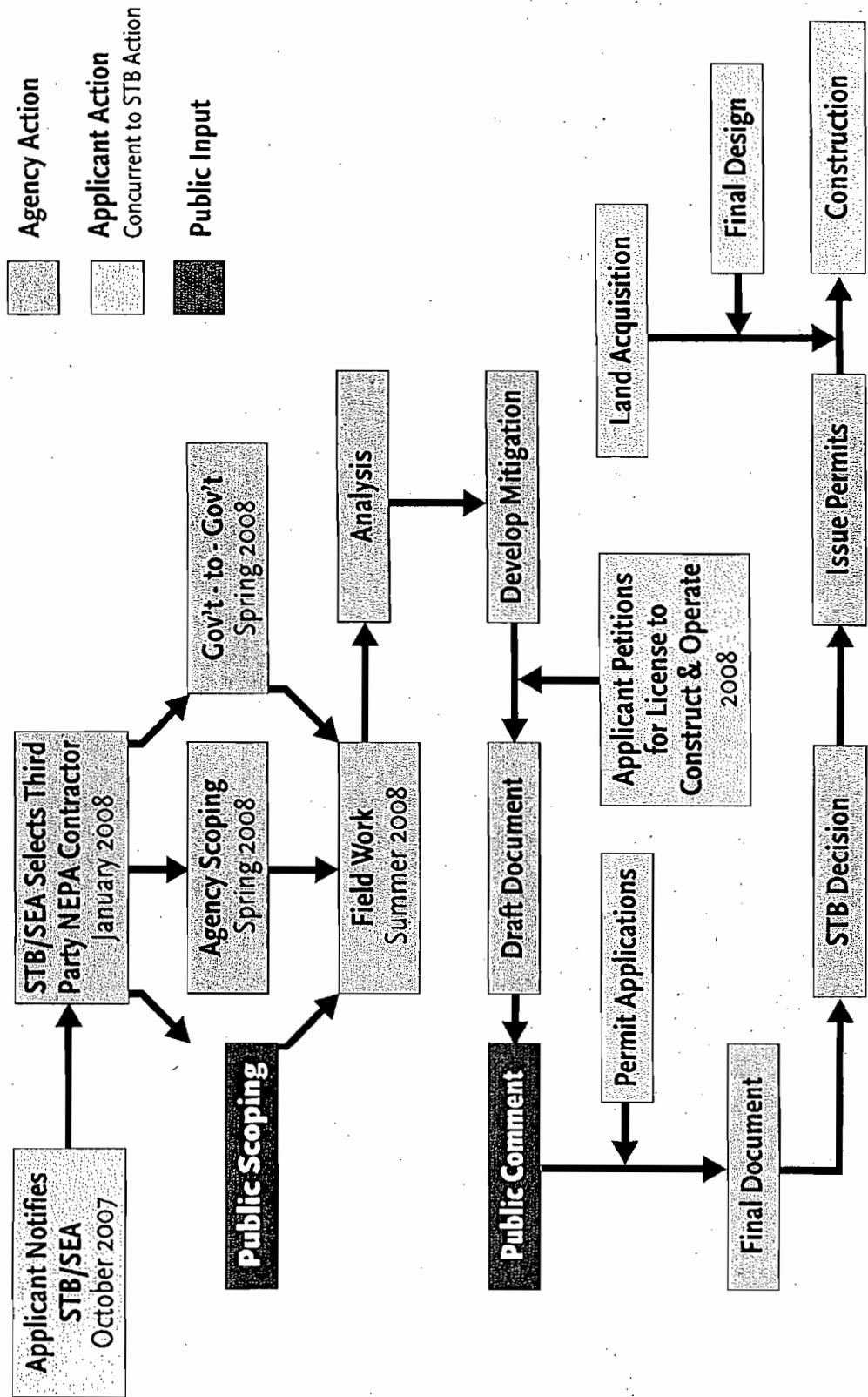
Again, thank you for your interest and your input.

Sincerely,

Stephenie Wheeler  
Public Involvement Officer

# PORT MACKENZIE

## RAIL EXTENSION



**Alcantra, Rosetta M.**

**From:** Stephenie Wheeler [wheelers@akrr.com]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 22, 2008 3:53 PM  
**To:** Alcantra, Rosetta M.; Lindamood, Brian; Sullivan, Patty  
**Subject:** Re: Fwd: ARRC public meetings and Point Mackenzie Rail Extension Project  
**Attachments:** 2008 Wasilla OH Comment-Response- Farmer - Port Mac.doc

Patty -

I just did... Comment/Response doc attached for our records...

- stephenie

>>> Patty Sullivan <patty.sullivan@matsugov.us> 01/22/08 3:35 PM >>>

Stephenie, do you want to answer this one?

I'll stick it in the binder here.

Patty

Patty Sullivan

Public Affairs Director

Mat-Su Borough

[psullivan@matsugov.us](mailto:psullivan@matsugov.us)

(907)745-9577

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** "Ken Farmer" <[badinc@mtaonline.net](mailto:badinc@mtaonline.net)>  
**Date:** January 22, 2008 3:12:49 PM AKST  
**To:** <[wheelers@akrr.com](mailto:wheelers@akrr.com)>, "Patty Sullivan" <[psullivan@matsugov.us](mailto:psullivan@matsugov.us)>  
**Subject:** ARRC public meetings and Point Mackenzie Rail Extension Project  
**Reply-To:** <[badinc@mtaonline.net](mailto:badinc@mtaonline.net)>

I just got notice of the open house on January 23<sup>rd</sup> and January 24<sup>th</sup>, However today is January 22<sup>nd</sup>. This is insufficient notice for such a meeting.

I am highly interested in this project as the proposed connection 3 runs through the property where I am building my retirement home. I travel as part of my work and require more than 1 to 2 days notice to attend these meetings. A minimum of 90 days would be far more reasonable for planning purposes.

I will not be able to attend this meeting, but would like to loudly voice my objection to the route running on the edge of Carpenter Lake.

Please send me a schedule of your future public meetings so I may have time to arrange to attend at least one meeting.

Ken Farmer

4/5/2008

## EMAIL RESPONSE SENT JANUARY 22, 2008

Ken -

I am unsure of why it took so long for you to receive notice regarding the Anchorage and Wasilla POP (Program of Project) open house events. How did you get your notice? I don't have you on either of my Anchorage or Wasilla mailing lists, but postcards are not the only way that I get the word out about our general open house events. I also send news releases to media outlets the first week of January, and publish advertisements in local papers 3-5 days prior. In addition, notice about these meetings has been posted on our web site since mid-December, and I notified local elected officials via our Community newsletter in mid-December as well.

Please be assured that you have not missed a critical opportunity to comment on the Port MacKenzie Rail Extension project. The Program of Project open houses events this month (Jan 19 in Seward, Jan 23 in Anchorage, Jan 24 in Wasilla and Jan 30 in Fairbanks) are not focused solely on the Port MacKenzie Rail Extension, although it is part of our overall capital improvement program for 2008. Rather, there was a very focused and comprehensive public outreach campaign that lasted several months in 2007 which included 5 public meetings, and dozens of organizational briefings, web site development, as well as other means of soliciting public input. Hopefully you were among the hundreds who responded to this outreach and provided comment.

Considering your interest, here is an update on this project: The Mat-Su / Railroad project team concluded its fact-gathering stage (May – December 2007) during which pertinent information from the local perspective, such as yours, helped to formulate and refine potential route alternatives for connecting the port to the railroad's mainline.

Earlier this month, we compiled a package of information consisting of an initial analysis of route alternatives, along with back-up including input from Alaskan residents and agencies, analysis of data from previous studies, and data from more recent field studies and conceptual planning efforts.

This package of information was forwarded to the Surface Transportation Board (STB) in mid-January. The STB is the federal agency with authority over any new U.S. rail lines (including extensions), and will oversee the environmental impact statement (EIS) that is required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

Also in January, the STB selected a third-party contractor (ICF International) to carry out the EIS. Enclosed is a flow chart of how the project is expected to progress through the NEPA process, with a few known dates indicated as reference points. The in-depth EIS is expected to take 18 months or longer, and will assess community (e.g., *transportation, zoning, infrastructure*), socio-economic (e.g., *recreation, commerce*), and environmental (e.g., *wildlife, wetlands, waterbodies*) impacts and determine mitigating actions.

So, you see, there is still much work to be done on the Port MacKenzie Rail Extension project. Involvement from interested citizens, such as you, is important at every step – from our alternative analysis in 2007, through the STB-led environmental phase to come.

Now that the STB is spearheading the EIS, actions of the Mat-Su Borough and Alaska Railroad are limited to providing information as requested by the STB and ICF in support of the EIS. We will also forward any additional public correspondence to the STB. While no longer in lead roles, the Borough and Railroad will continue to keep the public apprised of project developments and public involvement opportunities through the project web site – [www.portmacrail.com](http://www.portmacrail.com). We encourage you to check the site often for project updates.

Just to clarify, other than our POP open houses this month, the Railroad has not scheduled any further Port MacKenzie Rail Extension project meetings. This is now in the hands of the STB.

I hope this information is helpful to you.

Sincerely,

Stephenie Wheeler  
Public Involvement Officer  
Alaska Railroad  
265-2671

**EMAIL COMMENT RECEIVED JANUARY 22, 2008**

>>> "Ken Farmer" <badinc@mtaonline.net> 01/22/08 3:12 PM >>>

I just got notice of the open house on January 23<sup>rd</sup> and January 24<sup>th</sup>, However today is January 22<sup>nd</sup>. This is insufficient notice for such a meeting.

I am highly interestred in this project as the proposed connection 3 runs through the property where I am building my retirement home. I travel as part of my work and require more than 1 to 2 days notice to attend these meetings. A minimum of 90 days would be far mopre reasonable for planning purposes.

I will not be able to attend this meeting, but would like to loudly voice my objection to the route running on the edge of Carpenter Lake.

Please send me a schedule of your future public meetings so I may have time to arrange to attend at least one meeting.

Ken Farmer

**Alcantra, Rosetta M.**

**From:** Patty Sullivan [patty.sullivan@matsugov.us]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 23, 2008 9:38 PM  
**To:** Alcantra, Rosetta M.; Stephenie Wheeler  
**Subject:** Fwd: Rail Extention

I sent this out in the mail.

PS

Patty Sullivan  
Public Affairs Director  
Mat-Su Borough  
[psullivan@matsugov.us](mailto:psullivan@matsugov.us)  
(907)745-9577

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** "Pierre Strong" <[pierrestrong@gmail.com](mailto:pierrestrong@gmail.com)>  
**Date:** January 23, 2008 9:25:18 PM AKST  
**To:** "Patty Sullivan" <[patty.sullivan@matsugov.us](mailto:patty.sullivan@matsugov.us)>  
**Subject:** Re: Rail Extention

Thank you very much, I would appreciate it... Pierre Strong, PO Box 520489, Big Lake, Ak, 99652

On 1/23/08, **Patty Sullivan** <[patty.sullivan@matsugov.us](mailto:patty.sullivan@matsugov.us)> wrote:

Hello Pierre,

Send me your address, and I'll mail you one for free. The CD includes all background material that went to the STB, Surface Transportation Board. It is 500 MB, and visible on the web right now at [www.portmacrail.com](http://www.portmacrail.com)

CDs are also at local libraries: Willow, Big Lake, Wasilla, Palmer.

Sincerely,

Patty Sullivan

Patty Sullivan

Public Affairs Director

Mat-Su Borough

[psullivan@matsugov.us](mailto:psullivan@matsugov.us)

(907)745-9577

On Jan 23, 2008, at 9:11 PM, Pierre Strong wrote:

The CD's on the Rail extention project in the Valley, how can I obtain them and what price and do they include maps...

4/5/2008



## Tyonek Native Corporation

1689 C Street, Suite 219

Anchorage, AK 99501

Tel: (907)272-0707

Fax: (907)274-7125

---

To: Bruce Carr  
From: Tom Harris  
Date: 1/28/08  
Re: ARRC Planning


Dear Mr. Carr,

I would like to start by thanking you for meeting with John McClellan and Steven Holley and expressing your candid visions on ARRC's future plans and listening to our plan for development on the west side of the Cook Inlet. Please know that TNC intends to keep you and ARRC posted on our progress with our long-range goals.

I'm sure John and Steven told you this, but I would like to stress to you and ARRC that TNC's North Foreland Facility (NFF) is not in competition with Port Mackenzie, but a complement to it. We expect that the two ports can assist each other in providing quality service to their respective customers. We have been keeping in communication with Port Mackenzie, and TNC plans to work together with them to share the transportation opportunities presented. We here at TNC support rail access to Port Mackenzie and hope for future connection between Port Mackenzie and NFF to better promote positive development of Western Cook Inlet transportation.

Please make note of two other points of interest. One: that TNC, as an Alaskan Native Corporation in the Cook Inlet Region, has land selection claims in the Mat-Su Valley and we are willing to work together with ARRC to promote positive development of the west side of the Cook Inlet. Two: That TNC will shortly have a gravel pit at section 22 near Pittman with quality aggregate for sale at a competitive price.

Again, thank you for your time and we hope for a positive long-range relationship with ARRC and yourself in developing the west side of the Cook Inlet. If you have any question, you can contact me at TNC.



Tom Harris  
Chief Executive Officer  
Tyonek Native Corporation  
Ph : (907)272-0707  
Fax : (907)274-7125

**Alcantra, Rosetta M.**

---

**Sent:** Wednesday, February 06, 2008 11:02 PM  
**To:** Public\_Comment@akrr.com; info@portmacrail.com; Alcantra, Rosetta M.; Longtin, Wendy;  
info@homestead-graphics.com  
**Subject:** Port MacKenzie Comments

Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by  
(fortfolk@mtaonline.net) on Wednesday, February 6, 2008 at 23:02:07

---

name: Lance Baskin

address: pobox 877298

city: Wasilla

state: Alaska

zip: 99687

emailconfirm: fortfolk@mtaonline.net

emailconfirm2: This is regarding the proposed Mac east route for the Port MacKenzie  
corridor: it goes diagonally through my farm! This is completely unacceptable. I have been  
farming in the Point MacKenzie agricultural project area since 1982 and still have the  
right to farm. Reconsider that east route and change it to not go through my farm.

button: Submit

---

HTTP\_USER\_AGENT: Mozilla/4.0 (compatible; MSIE 6.0; Windows NT 5.1; SV1; InfoPath.1)





# 2008 Alaska Railroad Program of Projects (POP)

Your input is important to the Alaska Railroad as we pursue a program of capital improvements during 2008.  
Please write legibly (printing is appreciated). Attach additional sheets if necessary.

COMMENT FORM

Name

Paul Theodore

Phone

841 9464

Address

PO Box 581612

Email

nsult@hotmail

Your Comments:

Big Lake AK  
Moose crossing corridors  
should be placed on any  
Route.

~~Skip Creek~~

Money should be placed  
in the budget for the <sup>Traditional</sup> Chief  
to investigate sensitive sites.  
on all Routes. <sup>Anse</sup> Case Studies should be  
examined before any construction. PO Box 877885  
Wasilla AK

The Alaska Railroad welcomes your input. Please send your written comments:



Capital Projects - Public Comment  
Alaska Railroad Corporation  
P.O. Box 107500  
Anchorage, AK 99510-7500



ARRC's TTY/TTD 265-2620  
or voice 265-2494  
Alaska Relay TTY 800-770-8973  
or voice 1-800-770-8255



public\_comment@akrr.com



Fax (907) 265-2365



# 2008 Alaska Railroad Program of Projects (POP)

Your input is important to the Alaska Railroad as we pursue a program of capital improvements during 2008.  
Please write legibly (printing is appreciated). Attach additional sheets if necessary.

COMMENT FORM

Name Nancy Sult Phone 2321387

Friends of Old Knik

Address PO Box 521612 Big Lake Email nsult@hotmail.com

AK 99652

Your Comments:

Please use all available resources (ie AFRS, ANSCA, NAT Historic Register) to plan around sensitive areas of our valley. Shem Pete's Alaska by FARR & Kari is a great reference to find previous Indian sites that could be affected.

The Alaska Railroad welcomes your input. Please send your written comments:



Capital Projects - Public Comment  
Alaska Railroad Corporation  
P.O. Box 107500  
Anchorage, AK 99510-7500



ARRC's TTY/TTD 265-2620  
or voice 265-2494  
Alaska Relay TTY 800-770-8973  
or voice 1-800-770-8255



public\_comment@akrr.com



Fax (907) 265-2365



February 7, 2008

Nancy Sult and Paul Théodore  
Friends of Old Knik  
P.O. Box 521612  
Big Lake, AK 99652

**EXTERNAL AFFAIRS**  
TEL 907.265.2871  
FAX 907.265.2365

Dear Ms. Sult and Mr. Theodore:

Thank you for attending the Alaska Railroad Project Open House in Wasilla on January 24, 2008. And thank you for providing written comment regarding the Port MacKenzie Rail Extension project, a joint effort between the Matanuska-Susitna Borough and the Alaska Railroad.


The project team concluded its fact-gathering stage (May – December 2007) during which the local perspective helped to formulate and refine potential route alternatives for connecting the port to the railroad's mainline. In January, we compiled a package of information consisting of an initial analysis of route alternatives, along with input from Alaskan residents and agencies, analysis of data from previous studies, and data from more recent field studies and conceptual planning efforts. *(I have enclosed a CD that includes the information we provided in a four-volume document.)* This package of information was forwarded to the Surface Transportation Board (STB) in mid-January. The STB is the federal agency with authority over any new U.S. rail lines (including extensions), and will oversee the environmental impact statement (EIS) that is required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

Also in January, the STB selected a third-party contractor (ICF International) to carry out the EIS. The in-depth EIS is expected to take 18 months or longer, and will assess community (e.g., transportation, zoning, infrastructure), socio-economic (e.g., recreation, commerce), and environmental (e.g., wildlife, wetlands, water bodies) impacts and determine mitigating actions. So, you see, there is still much work to be done on the Port MacKenzie Rail Extension project. Involvement from interested citizens, such as you, is important at every step – from our alternative analysis in 2007, through the STB-led environmental phase to come.

Now that the STB is spearheading the EIS, actions of the Mat-Su Borough and Alaska Railroad are limited to providing information as requested by the STB and ICF in support of the EIS. We will also forward any additional public correspondence to the STB. While no longer in lead roles, the Borough and Railroad will continue to keep the public apprised of project developments and public involvement opportunities through the project web site – [www.portmacrail.com](http://www.portmacrail.com). We encourage you to check the site often for project updates.

Again, thank you for your interest and your input.

Sincerely,

  
Stephenie Wheeler  
Public Involvement Officer

**Alcantra, Rosetta M.**

**From:** Patty Sullivan [patty.sullivan@matsugov.us]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 19, 2008 5:27 PM  
**To:** Alcantra, Rosetta M.; Stephenie Wheeler  
**Subject:** Fwd: CD of Railroad extension

Mailing CD to him tomorrow.

thanks

PS

Patty Sullivan

Public Affairs Director

Mat-Su Borough

[psullivan@matsugov.us](mailto:psullivan@matsugov.us)

(907)745-9577

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** "Kenneth Duffus" <[ken.kndeng@ak.net](mailto:ken.kndeng@ak.net)>  
**Date:** February 17, 2008 3:04:57 PM AKST  
**To:** "Patty Sullivan" <[psullivan@matsugov.us](mailto:psullivan@matsugov.us)>  
**Subject:** CD of Railroad extension

Patty -

Can you send me a copy of the report that was done for this extension and any information or maps that detail the ROW takings they are anticipating by property owner and property.

Thank you,

Ken Duffus  
20441 Ptarmigan Blvd.  
Eagle River, AK 99577

4/5/2008

David Navecky  
STB Finance Docket No. 35095  
Surface Transportation Board  
395 E Street, SW  
Washington, DC 20423

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David Navecky  
STB Finance Docket No. 35095  
Surface Transportation Board  
395 E Street, SW  
Washington, DC 20423

**Port MacKenzie Rail Extension EIS Scoping Meetings**

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Address*



**SURFACE  
TRANSPORTATION  
BOARD**

**PORT MACKENZIE RAIL EXTENSION  
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT**  
Finance Docket No. 35095

**OPEN HOUSE SCOPING MEETINGS**

<b>Knik</b>	<b>March 3, 2008 5 - 8 pm</b> Knik Elementary School 6350 West Hollywood Wasilla, AK 99654
<b>Big Lake</b>	<b>March 4, 2008 5 - 8 pm</b> Big Lake Elementary School 3808 South Big Lake Road Big Lake, AK 99652
<b>Willow</b>	<b>March 5, 2008 5 - 8 pm</b> Willow Area Community Center Mile 70 Parks Highway Willow, AK 99688
<b>Houston</b>	<b>March 6, 2008 5 - 8 pm</b> Houston Middle School 12801 W. Hawk Lane Houston, AK 99694
<b>Wasilla</b>	<b>March 10, 2008 5 - 8 pm</b> Wasilla Multi-Use Sports Complex 1001 S. Mack Drive Wasilla, AK 99654
<b>Anchorage</b>	<b>March 11, 2008 5 - 8 pm</b> Anchorage Senior Center 1300 East 19 <sup>th</sup> Avenue Anchorage, AK 99501

**There will be no formal agency presentations;  
Surface Transportation Board (STB) staff will  
be available to answer questions and take  
comments.**

The meeting locations comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. § 12101 et seq.). Persons that need special accommodations should telephone the toll-free project number at 1-888-257-7560 at least 48 hours prior to the event.

**Alcantra, Rosetta M.**

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**From:** Patty Sullivan [patty.sullivan@matsugov.us]  
**Sent:** Friday, February 22, 2008 1:41 PM  
**To:** Alcantra, Rosetta M.; Stephenie Wheeler  
**Subject:** Rail CD going to Smole

Another person getting a CD, Greg Smole, picking it up today.

PS

Patty Sullivan

Public Affairs Director

Mat-Su Borough

[psullivan@matsugov.us](mailto:psullivan@matsugov.us)

(907)745-9577

4/5/2008

**Alcantra, Rosetta M.**

---

**From:** Patty Sullivan [patty.sullivan@matsugov.us]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 27, 2008 5:34 PM  
**To:** Longtin, Wendy; Alcantra, Rosetta M.; Stephenie Wheeler  
**Cc:** Brian Lindamood  
**Subject:** another CD mailed out Wes Hamrick

I'm mailing tomorrow to Wes Hamrick, Hc38 Box 2342  
Wasilla, AK 99654

I directed him to the STB web site.

PS

Patty Sullivan

Public Affairs Director

Mat-Su Borough

[psullivan@matsugov.us](mailto:psullivan@matsugov.us)

(907)745-9577

4/5/2008

**Alcantra, Rosetta M.**

**From:** Stephenie Wheeler [wheelers@akrr.com]  
**Sent:** Friday, March 07, 2008 5:02 PM  
**To:** mgwhedbee@aol.com  
**Cc:** Alcantra, Rosetta M.; Lindamood, Brian; Sullivan, Patty  
**Subject:** Re: STB Finance Docket No. 35095  
**Attachments:** 03\_07\_08 Response to GraceWhedbee.pdf

Grace -

Attached is a letter of response to your inquiry. I am also mailing a hard copy, along with a courtesy copy to the Surface Transportation Board.

I hope you have a good weekend.

- Stephenie

>>> <mgwhedbee@aol.com> 03/06/08 11:05 AM >>>  
You may send your answer by e-mail or mail. My address is  
P. O. Box 520045  
Big Lake, Alaska 99652

Thank you for your prompt response.

-----Original Message-----

**From:** Stephenie Wheeler <wheelers@akrr.com>  
**To:** mgwhedbee@aol.com  
**Sent:** Thu, 6 Mar 2008 9:48 am  
**Subject:** Re: STB Finance Docket No. 35095

Grace -

I am coordinating with the Project Manager to get an accurate answer for you. I will provide this via letter, as you requested a reply in writing. I need a mailing address, please.

Thank you for your interest and concern.

- stephenie

>>> <mgwhedbee@aol.com> 03/05/08 4:32 PM >>>  
On Monday, March 3rd, while at the STB Open House scoping meeting at Knik Elementary School I was having a conversation with David Navecky when Roger Purcell joined the conversation. He was wearing an official badge that identified him as a City Councilman from the City of Houston, Alaska.

During the conversation he insisted on several occasions that he has an agreement with the Alaska Railroad that the City supports the rail extension that goes through Houston South and the railroad will (at no cost to the City) put in a siding track on the current line in Houston, they will put in a Railroad station for passengers and will have a loading and unloading area for freight from the Houston light Industrial area.

In all public meeting and written statements, the railroad and the Borough have maintained the position that there are no plans now or in the foreseeable future for any commercial/industrial rail spur development along the new route.

Please clarify this as we are receiving two separate stories.

3/10/2008





March 7, 2008

Grace Whedbee  
P.O. Box 520045  
Big Lake, AK 99652

**EXTERNAL AFFAIRS**

TEL 907.265.2671  
FAX 907.265.2365

Dear Ms. Whedbee:

This letter is in response to your March 6, 2008, inquiry regarding the accuracy of claims made verbally by Houston Councilman Roger Purcell during the Surface Transportation Board (STB) public scoping meeting held March 3 at Knik Elementary School in Wasilla.

The Alaska Railroad has not "struck a deal" with the City of Houston to build a siding along the current rail alignment, develop a passenger depot, or construct a light industrial loading / unloading facility. The Port MacKenzie Rail Extension project opens up many possibilities for economic development, and perhaps Mr. Purcell was discussing a scenario that he prefers. However, I can assure you that a route has not been selected, nor have related infrastructure decisions been made (or promised).

I would like to clarify the mention of a siding being added as part of the Port MacKenzie project. This is in fact true, but not for the reasons that you heard suggested. Wherever the rail extension will tie into the mainline (whether it be Big Lake, Houston or Willow) there will need to be a siding. This siding would not be constructed specifically to accommodate a passenger depot or freight loading/unloading activity. Rather, it would be needed to stage trains that are moving from the main line into and out of the rail extension.

The scoping meeting that you and Mr. Purcell attended marks the beginning of a thorough process that will analyze the pros and cons, impacts and mitigations, of several route alternatives. The Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) process will take into account a myriad of economic, social, recreational and environmental impacts. Along the way, the STB will undoubtedly seek input from local governments, appropriate agencies, and Alaskans who are impacted and/or interested.

Until the EIS process is complete, it is premature and imprudent to predict selection of one route over the others, or to use such a prediction to pledge associated capital improvements. The Alaska Railroad would do neither.

Again, thank you for your interest in the Alaska Railroad and the Port MacKenzie Rail Extension project. We appreciate your efforts to stay informed and to participate.

Sincerely,

Stephenie Wheeler, Public Involvement Officer

cc: David Navecky, Surface Transportation Board

**Alcantra, Rosetta M.**

**From:** Patty Sullivan [patty.sullivan@matsugov.us]  
**Sent:** Friday, March 14, 2008 8:40 PM  
**To:** Brian Lindamood; Alcantra, Rosetta M.; Stephenie Wheeler  
**Subject:** Houston STB

Patty Sullivan  
Public Affairs Director  
Mat-Su Borough  
[psullivan@matsugov.us](mailto:psullivan@matsugov.us)  
(907)745-9577

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** "Cindy Bettine" <[cindybettine@mtaonline.net](mailto:cindybettine@mtaonline.net)>  
**Date:** March 13, 2008 11:35:48 PM GMT-08:00  
**To:** "Patty Sullivan" <[patty.sullivan@matsugov.us](mailto:patty.sullivan@matsugov.us)>  
**Subject:** RE: Comments from the Big Lake STB meeting

More comments on the meetings. Tonight at the RSA meeting a very disappointed member stated that he was at the meeting and stayed for one hour in Houston and he was the only one in attendance. He state that no information was available except maps.

---

4/5/2008

**Alcantra, Rosetta M.**

---

**From:** Patty Sullivan [patty.sullivan@matsugov.us]  
**Sent:** Friday, March 14, 2008 8:08 PM  
**To:** Brian Lindamood; Alcantra, Rosetta M.; Stephenie Wheeler  
**Subject:** Fwd: Port MacKenzie Rail Extension

I sent Pat the ISER study and will send him the Metz study when it is final.

Patty

Patty Sullivan

Public Affairs Director

Mat-Su Borough

[psullivan@matsugov.us](mailto:psullivan@matsugov.us)

(907)745-9577

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** "pat sharrock" <[patsharrock@alaska.net](mailto:patsharrock@alaska.net)>  
**Date:** March 13, 2008 10:54:46 PM GMT-08:00  
**To:** "Patty Sullivan" <[patty.sullivan@matsugov.us](mailto:patty.sullivan@matsugov.us)>  
**Subject:** Port MacKenzie Rail Extension

Hi Patty

I just saw Mr. Duffy on tonight's Ch 2 news. He talked about an income report concerning MacRail that was just released. Would you please send me a copy or by an email attachment.

Thanks

Patrick L. Sharrock

8731 Solar Drive

Anchorage, AK 99507

907-345-5353

4/5/2008

**Alcantra, Rosetta M.**

**From:** Patty Sullivan [patty.sullivan@matsugov.us]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 18, 2008 11:05 PM  
**To:** Alcantra, Rosetta M.; Stephenie Wheeler  
**Subject:** Fwd: Port MacKenzie Rail Extension  
**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Red

Mr. Demboski,  
I will send your comment to the STB, Surface Transportation Board.  
For the latest information on the project please visit their web site.

<http://www.stbportmacraileis.com>

Thank you,  
Patty  
Patty Sullivan  
Public Affairs Director  
Mat-Su Borough  
[psullivan@matsugov.us](mailto:psullivan@matsugov.us)  
(907)745-9577

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** "Demboski" <[demboskix4@gci.net](mailto:demboskix4@gci.net)>  
**Date:** March 18, 2008 7:40:22 PM GMT-08:00  
**To:** "Patty Sullivan" <[patty.sullivan@matsugov.us](mailto:patty.sullivan@matsugov.us)>  
**Subject:** Port MacKenzie Rail Extension

Hello,

I am very concerned over the Willow route. This Route proposed cuts through the Heart of Willow. It cuts through the most highly used area in willow. I have been Hunting the area for 20 years and can tell you this will really take a bite out of the moose population. I have 26 acres on Boot lake. Im only a mile away from the rail route. The noise is going to really be a problem. The proposed route is going to cut through established trap lines, winter and summer trails, Wetlands, creeks....I have counted as many as 70 moose in one day in the Rolly Creek area! Dog mushing trails, Snowmachineing trails, There has to be a better route! No one I have spoken to in Willow wants this project. Have we no voice? Houston would be better served by the rails. Willow already has Rails on the other side of the Highway we dont need this. Please have anyone who is intrested to talk on the issue contact me. Like I said before I spend alot of time in the woods right in the middle of the proposed area and could give alot of info.

Respectfully,  
Ben Demboski  
907-688-2671  
907-301-9177

4/5/2008

**Alcantra, Rosetta M.**

**From:** Patty Sullivan [patty.sullivan@matsugov.us]  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 27, 2008 4:23 PM  
**To:** Stephenie Wheeler; Alcantra, Rosetta M.; Brian Lindamood; Brad Sworts  
**Subject:** Ken Farmer/Cynthia Davis  
**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Red  
**Attachments:** 2008 Wasilla OH Comment-Response- Farmer - Port Mac.doc; ATT128896.htm

Ken Farmer's wife, Cynthia Davis, just called checking in on the latest with the project. I referred her to the STB site and told her the numbering system is the project team's, not the STB's. Nothing set in stone yet. She said they didn't get an initial postcard alerting them to our meetings. They did get the newsletter it sounds like. Loons and arctic terns, nest on their lake.

Her husband's earlier complaint is below. I want to make sure they are on the mailing list. She said another guy was at the Knik Elementary scoping meeting, meaning 2 people.

Patty

Patty Sullivan  
 Public Affairs Director  
 Mat-Su Borough  
[psullivan@matsugov.us](mailto:psullivan@matsugov.us)  
 (907)745-9577

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** "Stephenie Wheeler" <[wheelers@akrr.com](mailto:wheelers@akrr.com)>  
**Date:** January 22, 2008 3:52:50 PM AKST  
**To:** "Alcantra, Rosetta M." <[Rosetta.Alcantra@hdrinc.com](mailto:Rosetta.Alcantra@hdrinc.com)>, "Lindamood, Brian" <[LindamoodB@akrr.com](mailto:LindamoodB@akrr.com)>, "Patty Sullivan" <[patty.sullivan@matsugov.us](mailto:patty.sullivan@matsugov.us)>  
**Subject:** Re: Fwd: ARRC public meetings and Point Mackenzie Rail ExtensionProject

Patty -

I just did... Comment/Response doc attached for our records...

- stephenie

>>> Patty Sullivan <[patty.sullivan@matsugov.us](mailto:patty.sullivan@matsugov.us)> 01/22/08 3:35 PM >>>

Stephenie, do you want to answer this one?

I'll stick it in the binder here.

Patty

Patty Sullivan  
 Public Affairs Director  
 Mat-Su Borough  
[psullivan@matsugov.us](mailto:psullivan@matsugov.us)  
 (907)745-9577

4/5/2008

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** "Ken Farmer" <[badinc@mtaonline.net](mailto:badinc@mtaonline.net)>  
**Date:** January 22, 2008 3:12:49 PM AKST  
**To:** <[wheelers@akrr.com](mailto:wheelers@akrr.com)>, "Patty Sullivan" <[psullivan@matsugov.us](mailto:psullivan@matsugov.us)>  
**Subject:** ARRC public meetings and Point Mackenzie Rail Extension Project  
**Reply-To:** <[badinc@mtaonline.net](mailto:badinc@mtaonline.net)>

I just got notice of the open house on January 23<sup>rd</sup> and January 24<sup>th</sup>, However today is January 22<sup>nd</sup>. This is insufficient notice for such a meeting.

I am highly interestred in this project as the proposed connection 3 runs through the property where I am building my retirement home. I travel as part of my work and require more than 1 to 2 days notice to attend these meetings. A minimum of 90 days would be far mopre reasonable for planning purposes.

I will not be able to attend this meeting, but would like to loudly voice my objection to the route running on the edge of Carpenter Lake.

Please send me a schedule of your future public meetings so I may have time to arrange to attend at least one meeting.

Ken Farmer

4/5/2008